



NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF LOUISIANA STATE FIRE MARSHAL

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Child Dies in New Iberia House Fire

IBERIA PARISH- State Fire Marshal (SFM) deputies continue investigating a house fire in Iberia Parish that claimed the life of a child.

Around 5:30 a.m. on December 21, the New Iberia Fire Department responded to a call for a house fire located in the 300 block of Deare Street. While six occupants were able to escape unharmed, firefighters later located the body of a 4-year-old girl inside. Official identification and cause of death is pending an autopsy.

Following an assessment of the scene, deputies determined the fire originated in one of the home's bedrooms. While the official cause of this fire remains undetermined at this time, deputies cannot rule out potential electrical malfunction and/or the possibility of unsafe heating practices involving candles.

The State Fire Marshal's Office would like to remind residents to practice safe home heating as cold temperatures make themselves a mainstay across our state. Some of the top safety tips are:

- Place space heaters 3-5 feet from combustible objects like blankets
- Plug all heating appliances directly into wall outlets, not power strips or extension cords
- Do not use stoves or ovens to heat homes
- Don't overfill fireplaces/wood burning stoves
- Do not leave candles/open flames (or space heaters) left unattended
- Have working smoke alarms in your home!

Unfortunately, deputies were unable to locate working smoke alarms in this home. The SFM's Operation Save-A-Life program partners with local fire departments and districts to provide FREE smoke alarm installations, at any time of the year, for families in need of assistance accessing the critical emergency-alert equipment.

In addition to having working smoke alarms, the SFM also emphasizes the importance of having planned and practiced escape routes for your home that include knowing two ways out of every room. To register for a free smoke alarm, or learn more about Operation Save-A-Life, visit lasfm.org.

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